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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE



*A Publication Concerned With
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

President

Michael Murphy

Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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Welcome New Members

Ottawa Area

Maria Balakrishnan & Family
Pierre P.B. Baumgart & Family
Melanie Boyd / Shawn McDonald
Nicole Bruneau & Family
Mark Cuddy & Family
Jeanne Audry Currie & Family
Nicole Defretière
Tanya Dubas/David Edelstein
Peter R. Fuller
Kara-Lee Golota
Connie Howes-Davidson & Family
Kenneth Hum
Sheila Keene
Louanne Lax & Family
Bryarly McEachern
Laura Penney
Sue Phillips
Jennifer Rowland
Laura & Tim Sookocheff
Liam K. Towers & Family
Martine Tremblay
Paul Wise
Debra Zanewich

Other Areas

Michael J. Moore, Morrisburg ON
Jean-François Jetté, Mont-Laurier PQ

Henry Steger
Chair, Membership Committee
February 2006

“Golden Anniversary” Membership List 1942 – 2005

*Henry Steger
Membership Chair*

Joined in

1942	R. Yorke. Edwards	Victoria BC
1943	C. Stuart Houston	Saskatoon SK
1943	Mrs. Sheila Thomson	Ottawa ON
1946	J.M. Gillett	Ottawa ON
1947	W.J. Cody	Ottawa ON
1947	W.A. Fuller	Athabasca AB
1948	Mr. David Erskine	Ottawa ON
1948	Mrs. E. Frankton	Ottawa ON
1950	H.G. Lumsden	Aurora ON
1951	E. L. Bousfield	Ottawa ON
1954	Yvonne & James Blendell	Clayton ON

J.E.V. Goodwill (1935), W.H. Minshall (1936), V.E.F. Solman (1946), Henry H. Hildebrand (1949) and F.W. Munro (1954) have either passed away or did not renew their membership for 2005.

The 127th Annual Business Meeting

Karen McLachlan Hamilton

For the first time in years the night of the OFNC annual business meeting (ABM) was not unusually cold or snowy. That may be the reason for the large turnout, or because it was the night that the winners of the photography contest were to be announced.

The evening began with a preview of the winning photographs, socialising and reviewing the minutes of the 126th ABM.

Eventually the meeting was called to order and we were to focus on the business portion of the meeting. There was the passing of the previous minutes, an explanation of the financial report, committee report presentations and nominations to deal with. Points of interest include: an increase in Club revenue, a stable membership, the introduction of CFN abstracts on the OFNC website, and the success of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden's plant sale. It should be noted that the increase in Club assets was due to the generous bequest from the estate of M. Groh, a long standing member of the OFNC. It was agreed that Janet Gehr will continue as Auditor for another year and your Council members for 2006 are:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Business Manager
Editor CFN
Editor T&L

Mike Murphy
Ken Allison
Susan Laurie-Bourque
Frank Pope
Bill Cody
Francis Cook
Karen McLachlan Hamilton

Committee Chairs

Birds
Computer
Conservation
Education & Publicity
Excursion & Lectures/ Nominations
Finance
FWG
Macoun Rep

Chris Traynor
Dan Miller
Stan Rosenbaum
Gillian Marsten
Fenja Brodo
Anne MacKenzie
David Hobden
Diane Kitching

Membership
Publications
ON Rep

Henry Steger
Ron Bedford
Eleanor Zurbrigg

The new members at large on Council are Susan Howard, Diane Lepage, Justin Peters, and Julia Cipriana. Chairs not on council are Irwin Brodo (Awards) and Rob Lee (Macoun). Retiring from Council are Louise Schwartz (Finance), Kathy Conlan (Member at large) and Dave Smythe (Membership).

Now for the photography contest.

There were over 250 entries and nine winners. Annika and Kyle Burghout were the junior winners. Jim Robertson's family of groundhogs was the successful mammal image, and he also won in the vegetation category. Stephen Darbyshire took the winning scenery image while Ruth Allison's Bullfrog was the prized amphibian. Lois Knaggs' winning photograph may be found on the insert in this issue and Christine Hanrahan took the prize for the best insect/spider. The grand prize went to Dave Sangster for his wonderful grasshopper. Gwen Williams received an Honourable mention. The evening ended with a 30 minute "slide show" of all the entries. It was obvious that there are many talented photographers in the club and there are many beautiful things to experience around us. Gillian Marsten and Suzanne Deschenes did an excellent job making this event memorable. The winning images can be seen on the OFNC website.

For those who are new to the Club and others who would like to participate in another contest, the OFNC is offering another opportunity. This time the theme is "Tales of Trails."

OFNC Committees for 2006

Frank Pope

The following OFNC committee members were approved by the Council at its meeting on February 20th. Committee members may be added during the year as approved by the Council. The members listed below will operate your club in 2006. Committee Chairs appear in bold letters with their telephone numbers. Should you have any questions, comments, complaints or compliments pertaining to the operations of a committee, or should you desire to serve on a committee, please give the chair a call or speak to a member of the relevant committee.

AWARDS

Irwin Brodo (723-2054)
Christine Hanrahan
Bev McBride
Eleanor Zurbrigg

BIRDS

**Chris Traynor
(721-9197)**

Ken Allison
Marie Bedard
Colin Bowen
Marcel Gahbauer
Christine Hanrahan
Bernie Ladouceur
Christina Lewis
Bev McBride
Gordon Pringle
Michael Tate
Eve Ticknor

**BIRD RECORDS
(subcommittee)**

**Gordon Pringle
(224-0543)**

Ken Allison
Bruce Di Labio
Marcel Gahbauer
Bob Gorman
Bernie Ladouceur
Christina Lewis
Daniel St-Hilaire
Jeff Skevington
Michael Tate
Chris Traynor

**COMPUTER
MANAGEMENT**

Dan Miller (820-3905)
Sandy Garland
Sandra Gushue
Gordon Pringle

CONSERVATION

**Stanley Rosenbaum
(596-4288)**
Evelyne Boucher
Lynne Bricker
Christine Hanrahan
David Hobden
Philip Martin
Frank Pope
Adrienne Sinclair

**EDUCATION &
PUBLICITY**

**Gillian Marston
(825-7248)**
Betty Campbell
Kathy Conlan
Suzanne Deschenes
Laura Penney
Pearl Peterkin
Ann Prescott
Ona Spratt

**EXCURSIONS &
LECTURES**

Fenja Brodo (723-2054)
Connie Clark
Susan Howell
Philip Jeffries
Jeff Skevington
Marilyn Ward

FINANCE

**Ann MacKenzie
(736-7051)**
Ron Bedford
Bill Cody
Gillian Marston
Frank Pope
Bill Stewart

**FLETCHER WILDLIFE
GARDEN**

David Hobden (521-4145)
Charlie Clifford
Colin Freebury
Sandra Garland
Jay Ladell
Diane Lepage
Christine Hanrahan
Henry Steger
Partner representative
Catherine Hooper

MACOUN FIELD CLUB

Rob Lee (623-8123)

Annie Belair
Martha Camfield
Barbara Gaertner
Diane Kitching
Jonathon Hickman
Maryse Mahy
Patricia Whitridge

MEMBERSHIP

Henry Steger (825-0374)
Dave Smythe
Verna Smythe
Marilyn Ward

NOMINATING

Fenja Brodo (723-2054)
Frank Pope
Eleanor Zurbrigg

PUBLICATIONS

Ron Bedford (733-8826)
Bill Cody
Francis Cook
Karen McLachlan Hamilton
Elizabeth Morton
Joyce Reddoch

Conservation Matters

David Hobden

Leitrim Wetland

Retired Museum of Nature botanist and wetland specialist, Albert Dugal, wrote to the Ontario Minister of the Environment, Laurel Broten, requesting an individual environmental assessment for the Leitrim Community storm water management system. The location of the planned storm water pond was abruptly changed when (as long ago predicted by independent experts) the site was found to have high permeability in the soil and bedrock. He also called for an individual assessment of the provincially-significant wetland portion of the second proposed development.

The Conservation Committee has drafted a letter to Minister Broten in support of these requests. The Sierra Club is trying to arrange a meeting to discuss the issues. An OFNC representative will, likely, be included if the meeting happens. For more information on the Leitrim Wetlands: <http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/leitrim.html>.

Getting ON/FON and Affiliates to Pressure the Ontario Government

The OFNC wants to see the ON (FON) return to its position as a strong voice for nature in Ontario. The Club also wants a unified voice from Ontario naturalist's groups when lobbying the provincial government in matters concerning environmental protection. This includes reforms to the Environmental Assessment Act and related acts, presentations at the OMB (recently noted), and pressure on the government to live up to their pre-election green promises. OFNC Council adopted a resolution put forth by the Conservation Committee to this effect.

Resolution adoption by OFNC Council:

Whereas Ontario Nature (formerly the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, "the Federation") assumed a highly effective leadership position in lobbying the Ontario Government over the Lands for Life issues during approximately 1997-1998, and

Whereas the Ontario Liberal Government was elected in 2003 significantly on the basis of "green" election promises including protection of natural heritage lands and greenspace, and

Whereas Ontario Nature is presently in the process of "team building" following a period of substantial staff turnover, and thereby will be re-assigning staff duties during the next few months,

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, call upon Ontario Nature to return to a strong lobbying activity aimed at persuading the Ontario Government to fulfill its pre-election "green promises," and

Be it also resolved that Ontario Nature be called upon to involve its Affiliate Societies in these said lobbying activities, to the extent that they are able to contribute.

This motion was presented and accepted at a recent ON Board of Directors meeting. Staff are to begin work to implement it.

Requests for Permits to Take Water

Lafarge and Tomlinson operate neighbouring quarries on Moodie Drive adjacent to the NCC Stony Swamp land. Both are applying for permits to take water (PTTW) in considerably greater amounts than presently allowed. We and the NCC Greenbelt Manager are concerned about effects of proposed massive additional water-taking on the water table in Stony Swamp. We understand Ken McRae, a member of Goulbourn Wetlands Group, has commented on the application as follows:

- i) the situation needs a more demanding review than that provided by the existing application
- ii) that the cumulative impacts of all water taking in the system need to be assessed, not just the individual PTTW applications.

City Proposal to Connect Walkley and Innes Roads

Walkley Road presently terminates just east of Highway 417 with a sharp right turn southbound onto Ramsayville Road. Just to the north is the "green hill" of the former Gloucester Dump, now part of the NCC Greenbelt. The area is regenerating to a natural state, providing, for example, good owl habitat. If the City really needs to connect Walkley and Innis roads, the new road should be constructed alongside Hwy 417 to minimize fragmentation of greenspace, rather than following the line of Ramsayville Road to the north. We will discuss this informally with NCC staff before deciding if more action is needed.

Rail Maintenance Yard near the Airport

We were surprised to hear of a proposal for a new train maintenance yard as part of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Project. The proposed new yard is situated on the west side of the old CPR tracks and east of the Airport Parkway between Lester and Hunt Club Roads. City-owned land, acquired when the railway right of way and the Parkway were purchased, will be used. However, the yard will be located just west of the Medeola Woods, a unique 20 acre old growth forest which extends into

wetland areas near Lester Road. It was one of three sites considered, so we wonder why a site that includes wetland was selected over the alternatives such as the existing railyard. For more information see the citizens' group Save Our Greenspace web site: www.saveourgreenspace.ca/ or the City's web site www.ottawa.ca/ and search for "LRT."

Proposed Wetland Purchase

The City is considering spending \$1.2M to purchase two fragments, totalling about 3 ha, of a larger wetland in the Stittsville area which is approved for development. Given the intended development all around them, these wetlands are unlikely to survive. Ultimately the City will have two pieces of nondescript greenspace for which it paid a premium price. There is also adjacent land to be donated to the City which might reduce the average price per hectare being paid. Consider the sale of 5309 Bank Street by the City: 71 ha sold for 1.7M. This is a unique area, probably the most significant one in the City that is not already a Conservation Area. It has, in effect, been exchanged for little more than two fragments of, probably, doomed wetland.

With limited funds, the City should use what funds it has to buy premium quality greenspaces that can be maintained in their natural state. The promised Greenspace Master Plan must provide the mechanism to do better in the future. Please check the Conservation pages on the OFNC web site (<http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation>) for more information.

Acknowledgments: This report relies on materials prepared by several members of the Conservation Committee and some others

The Manning Funds

Frank Pope

On November 8, 1998, Thomas Henry Manning died. He was an honorary member of the Club and had been a member for 57 years. Mr. Manning had a keen interest in the Canadian north. In his will he left a bequest of \$100,000 to the OFNC. Members of the Council were asked for suggestions about the use of this money (Moore 1999).

In a later issue of *T&L*, I provided a summary of the six suggestions that were received. They covered support for articles published in the CFN about the north, support for northern field studies, an endowment to support publication of the CFN, an endowment to cover mailing costs for both Club publications, splitting interest between the CFN and the OFNC, and support for a commercial venture to publish bird song and multi-media CDs related to Birds of Canada. (Pope 200)

In the end, Council decided to treat the \$100,000 as an endowment. Interest from this endowment would be deposited into two funds, one for CFN and one for OFNC. The interest would be split 80/20. Unused interest in any year would be carried over to the next year. The CFN portion would be used to defray the costs of printing articles about the north in cases where an author did not have institutional support to publish it. The OFNC portion would be used to support projects approved by Council. At the beginning, interest earned on the endowment was about \$6,000 per year but lately it has slipped to about \$5,000. As of Sept. 30, 2004, the remaining balance in the funds was: CFN - \$15,805, OFNC - \$2,457.

The following expenditures have been drawn from the funds up to Sept. 30, 2004.

CFN

2000 - nil

2001 - \$1,400, 3 articles (birds and mammals in Thelon, quillworts in Yukon, frogs at Churchill)

2002 - \$120, 1 article (golden eagle attacks harlequin duck)

2003 - \$4,112, 6 articles (grizzly bears in northern Manitoba, common Eiders around Digges Sound, wolf response to sled dog, predation by wolves on wolverines and martens, Canada and the buffalo, sperm whale strandings)

2004 - \$1,440, 1 article (range extension of vascular plant flora in NWT and Nunavut)

OFNC

2000 - nil

2001 - \$220, Peregrine Watch

2002 - \$1,491 (Taverner Cup donation \$1,250, Peregrine Watch \$241)

2003 - \$1,550 (Taverner Cup donation \$1,250, Peregrine Watch \$300)

2004 - nil

References

Moore, D. 1999. Letter from the President. *T&L* 33(3): 115.

Pope, F. 200. The Manning Bequest. *T&L* 34(2): 54-55.

Larose Forest Update

Christine Hanrahan

*It is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes a claim upon
men's hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of air, that
emanation from old trees, that so wonderfully changes and
renews a weary spirit.*

- Robert Louis Stevenson



Larose Forest Trail, Photo by C. Hanrahan

Introduction

Larose Forest is situated about 60 kilometres east of Ottawa in the United Counties of Prescott-Russell (UCPR), near the towns of Limoges and Bourget. At roughly 10,540 hectares (26,000 acres) it is the largest forest in this part of eastern Ontario.

Various inventories over the last few years have revealed a tremendous variety of flora and fauna, underscoring the important role this forest plays for wildlife. For this reason alone, it is worthy of our attention. But the forest has many dimensions, it is also a working forest, an outdoor classroom, and a place for hiking, biking, and other activities. It is gradually becoming a destination for birdwatchers, hikers, naturalists and those interested in outdoor recreation. This report updates my last article on Larose Forest (Hanrahan 2004) and provides information on the outcome of the 2004 Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) decision, and a number of other Larose related topics that have arisen, some new and some new-to-me.

Background

When a local group, Francoscénie Inc., proposed a theatrical pageant/theme park called *L'écho d'un peuple*, for Larose Forest, there was widespread concern that the forest's conservation values would be destroyed. Accordingly a number of people came together in an attempt to stop this project. Under the banner of The Friends of Larose Forest, they sought help from many quarters including the OFNC. As a last measure, they went to the OMB to appeal the UCPR Official Plan (OP) Amendment No. 4 which would allow this development. Despite what many thought, the OMB appeal was **not** against Francoscénie Inc. **nor** was there ever any doubt in anyone's mind that the project itself was an interesting and innovative event that deserved to be staged—but not in Larose Forest!

The Development Proposal and the OMB

In 2002 Francoscénie Inc. put forth their plans for Larose Forest, at the same time applying to the UCPR for an amendment to the OP and to the City of Clarence-Rockland for a similar amendment, to allow this development. In March 2003, the UCPR approved the OP Amendment but Clarence-Rockland made no decision either way. Interestingly, at about this time UCPR also produced a map showing the project site as non-significant woodland (unforested) when in fact it is as thickly treed as the surrounding woodland deemed significant. How this 'slip-up' happened has not been clearly explained. It should also be noted that Larose Forest is zoned Conservation land by the City of Clarence-Rockland within whose boundaries the largest portion of the forest lies.

The development proponents initially asked for 142 hectares (or just over 353 acres) in Larose Forest to stage their pageant. However, under public pressure, they modified their application, asking for 73 hectares (180 acres), of which, they said, only 11 hectares (27 acres) would be developed for Phase I (the pageant). In fact their plans called for a 6 hectare (15 acre) parking lot, a 6 hectare (15 acre) staging site, a 10 hectare (25 acre) septic bed, and 34 hectare (85 acre) theme park. Equally worrying was the precedent setting nature of this development, should it go ahead.

Tourism revenue is highly sought after and not just in Prescott-Russell, where it was

hoped that *L'écho d'un peuple* would draw thousands of tourists (and their money) to the area. If this meant opening the forest to any development so be it, seemed to be the prevailing attitude at the time. Certainly a decision in favour of Francoscénie Inc. would give the green light for other proposals. According to an Ottawa Citizen story of February 5, 2003, Francoscénie Inc. was convinced that their project would bring an annual income of \$6 million to the area economy, which seemed then, and seems now, quite astounding. For more about the proposed development see Hanrahan (2004) or check out <http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/larose/laroseforest.php>.

Evidence of how much Francoscénie Inc. wanted the Larose site is borne out by the revelation that over 20 other sites were offered but all were turned down. Some of these sites already had the necessary infrastructure in place, and several were along the Ottawa River, making them ideal for this particular project. It was these conflicting views, the desire to develop the forest and the desire to see it preserved, that led to the lengthy and costly OMB hearing.

We must protect the forests for our children, grandchildren and children yet to be born. We must protect the forests for those who can't speak for themselves such as the birds, animals, fish and trees.
Attributed to - Chief Edward Moody, Qwatsinas, Nuxalk Nation

Update on the OMB

Initially expected to take only two weeks, the hearing began in December 2003, resumed in February 2004 for a short period and was completed in March 2004. The Friends of Larose Forest (referred to hereafter as the appellants) did a sterling job rounding up witnesses, preparing mountains of evidence, and hiring a lawyer to present their case for preserving the forest. The OFNC participated in this process through the Conservation Committee. Although the OMB is supposed to be impartial and unbiased, the presiding judge left no doubt which side he preferred. When the decision was finally handed down in December 2004 it was in favour of Francoscénie Inc.

The ruling makes interesting, if not disturbing, reading. The language is extreme, vindictive, and pejorative. Throughout, those presenting on behalf of Francoscénie Inc. are treated respectfully, while both the appellants and their witnesses are castigated. To read the entire ruling please see <http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e%2Ddecisions/pl030382%5F%231920.pdf>.

However, this wasn't the end of the story. Shortly after Francoscénie Inc. won the OMB, they served notice to the appellants that they intended to seek a Motion for Costs, this despite having almost all of their legal and other services provided pro bono. Equally upsetting and unforgivable was their truly nasty vilification in the

local media, of those trying to save Larose. Having won their case, one would think some mercy would be shown! In January 2005, the amount sought by Francoscénie Inc. was \$137,000 (to read the decision:

<http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e%2Ddecisions/pl030382%5F%231124.pdf>). In the 51 page report accompanying the Motion, the language from the OMB judge escalated calling the appellants irrelevant, vexatious and frivolous. They were taken to task for supposedly asking questions that had already been decided by the Board, and for having witnesses who presented "irrelevant" testimony. How fair was it for the OMB judge to agree with and assign this Motion for Costs against ordinary citizens doing the job the United Counties should have been doing in the first place, ensuring protection of their natural heritage?

The appellants hired another lawyer and appealed the Motion and eventually, the costs were reduced from \$137,000 to \$15,000. Nonetheless, this sum on top of their legal costs amounted to approximately \$75,000. The OFNC made a contribution towards the costs incurred by the Friends of Larose, as did some very generous individuals. The development proponents were well-funded with access to numerous professional resources. Throughout the process, they were also strengthened by a parallel defense mounted at public cost by the UCPR. The appellants had no access to such resources, professional or financial, and have borne the bulk of the costs.

While awaiting the OMB decision, Francoscénie Inc. finally opted for one of the 20 alternate sites, located at a tourist farm near Casselman. It has all the necessary infrastructure in place and is easily accessible from Highway 417. Despite this, *L'écho d'un peuple*, quickly fell onto hard times. Numerous problems beset the project including lower attendance than anticipated, financial difficulties, and loss of key people on the board, all leading to Francoscénie Inc. seeking bankruptcy protection in 2005 (well-documented in local newspapers including the Ottawa Citizen). However, they have received support from local politicians and others and are set to stage their third season in 2006. Were it not for the above noted personal attacks through the media, one could feel a degree of sympathy for the group.

The clearest way into the universe is through a forest wilderness.

- John Muir

Update on Flora and Fauna

In a Citizen article dated April 2, 2003, one of the founding members of Francoscénie Inc. was quoted as saying "*this is an artificial forest and there are almost no animals.*" We knew this to be false—our bird list was already quite substantial and a number of interesting and regionally significant vascular plants had recently been identified, but clearly more work had to be done to refute those who believed the forest nearly devoid of life. There is still a lot of work left in

documenting the forest's biodiversity, but we have made a very good beginning.

Vascular Plants

In the summer of 2004, Eleanor Thomson kindly offered to conduct a vascular plant survey in Larose Forest. Combined with orchid records from Joyce and Allan Reddoch and observations from a few other naturalists, her very lengthy list produced over 520 species for the forest. During 2005 a few more records were added for a total of 530 species to date (see Appendix 1 for a partial list). During an OFNC outing on August 4 2005, we found an interesting new plant for the forest, Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*). According to Joyce Reddoch, this plant was last found east of Ottawa in 1903. Unfortunately, another plant found in 2005 caused concern, not pleasure. A small stand of the very invasive Pale Swallowwort, or Dog-strangling Vine (*Cynanchum rossicum*) was found along Conc. 8. These plants will be dug up before they set seed in 2006. There is still much left to find in Larose, but thanks to Eleanor and others, we have an excellent list to go on with (<http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/larose/plants.html>).

Birds

A number of species have been added to the Larose list since the original one was published in January 2004 (Hanrahan 2004). As of January 2006, 117 species of birds have been recorded in the forest, 93 species breed there, and a further five are suspected of breeding (Appendix 2). Many more species are yet to be added (<http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/larose/birds.html>). A brochure about the birds of Larose Forest including a list of species is available from me (vanessa@magma.ca).

The first Larose Christmas Bird Count held in January 2005 was organized by Jacques Bouvier and a second was in January 2006. This area promises to be a good addition to area CBCs. As word spreads more people will participate in the count which covers an area greater than the forest itself.

Mammals

Moose immediately come to mind when one thinks of Larose mammals, for it is one of only two places where this species may be reliably found in eastern Ontario (the other is the Alfred Bog). Twenty-one species of mammals have been recorded to date, including the Fisher, Coyote, River Otter and the occasional Black Bear (<http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/larose/mammals.html>).

Insects

The only insects for which consistent records have been kept are butterflies. The list now stands at 46 species including a 1981 record of an Eastern Tailed Blue. I have been astonished at the remarkable diversity and sheer number of butterflies to be found in Larose. There are certainly a lot more yet to be added to the list which like all species lists for Larose Forest, is considered preliminary

(<http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/larose/butterflies.html>).

In addition to butterflies, a variety of other insects and spiders have been found including Blister Beetles, Tiger Beetles, Scarab Beetles, Milkweed Bugs and Beetles, Bush Katyids, Cecropia Moths, Hummingbird Moths, Milkweed Tussock Moths, Megachilid Bees, Predacious Diving Beetles, Backswimmers, Ambush Bugs, Widow Skimmers, Chalk-fronted Skimmers, Bluets, River Jewelwings, Ebony Jewelwings, Snow Fleas, various wasps, Argiope Spiders, Wolf Spiders and many, many others. We need people familiar with the various families to help out with an inventory of these creatures (see note about the BioBlitz on page 93).

Reptiles and Amphibians

Twelve species of reptiles and amphibians have been found thus far in Larose: American Toad, Bullfrog, Leopard Frog, Wood Frog, Spring Peeper, Chorus Frog, Green Frog, Gray Treefrog, Garter Snake, Mole Salamander species, Painted Turtle, and Snapping Turtle.

*Acts of creation are ordinarily reserved for gods and poets.
To plant a pine, one need only own a shovel.*

- Aldo Leopold

New Forestry Initiatives for Larose

Larose Forest has always been and continues to be, a working forest. Horse logging occurred in the area until the sad and untimely death of the last horse logger in late 2004. In 2005 South Nation Conservation Authority (SNCA) took over forestry management in Larose with responsibility for logging operations. At present SNCA in cooperation with UCPR, is developing a 5-year operating plan and a 20-year management plan. Two public meetings to review the plans were held in December 2005 and January 2006. The SNCA website says they are "*A committed to the concept of sustainable development and an ecosystem-based approach in the planning and managing of its forest resources.*" SNCA follows provincial guidelines used on Crown Lands. With respect to managing for wildlife values this means that they will leave six snags (wildlife trees) and 7-8 mast trees per hectare. I was told that their forest technicians are trained to look for and note the location of stick nests. Depending on the species using the nests, buffer zones will be implemented. Fairly common species such as Broad-winged Hawks will not be granted the same priority as Northern Goshawk or Red-shouldered Hawk for example. According to one of the foresters with SNCA, the area surrounding a known goshawk nest would be excluded from harvesting operations from March 1 to July 31. Additionally, a minimum crown closure of 70% would be retained. Furthermore, the guidelines call for a 20 metre reserve on inactive nests in case they

are used in the future. Guidelines for other considerations such as buffer zones around water bodies and riparian areas are also addressed. While the forestry plans recognize the value of snags, mast trees, and nesting raptors, I would like to see management plans consider habitat for songbirds and other wildlife dependent on the forest. Conversations with SNCA foresters have been encouraging thus far, and they have also expressed a desire to protect locations of rare and significant species of flora and fauna. One can only hope that the reality is as good as the theory.

Recreation in Larose Forest

Several recreational pursuits have become increasingly visible and more organized in Larose Forest. Ski Larose now has 18 kilometres of groomed trails, maps, toilet facilities and a website (<http://skilarose.ca>). Sled dog teams are nothing new in Larose, but a new organization, Mush Larose, has assumed responsibility for maintaining the winter trails for this increasingly popular pursuit. Of course snowmobiling is the most visible winter activity and the Eastern Ontario chapter of the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) (<http://www.ofsc.on.ca/>) maintains many groomed trails in Larose, more of which are now patrolled. ATVs have always used the forest, especially on weekends. However, they have now joined the ranks of the above organized pursuits under the banner of the Ontario Federation of All Terrain Vehicle Clubs and some trails now sport their small metal signs. Whether this means that ATV use will be more closely monitored remains to be seen (but I hope so). One good thing that might arise is the pressure to keep them off the trails posted as "No Motor Vehicles Allowed" which, in the past, they've blithely ignored. As stated before (Hanrahan 2004), the forest is big enough that many recreational pursuits can be followed without undue conflict, particularly if a modicum of respect is used.

Cultural History

At one time the settlement of Grant was a thriving little community with houses, a cheese factory, post office, school and church. Today, you would be hard pressed to find any signs of human habitation, apart from the small Grant Cemetery and foundations of the church and school. Larose Forest now covers the site, a fascinating example of nature reclaiming her own, with help, of course, from the tree planters. Local historian, Alexandra De Quimper, has written a book about Grant (De Quimper 2002) and conducts guided tours in Larose, during which she brings the community back to life. The OFNC held its first successful "Walk-&-Talk" tour with Alexandra last year, and will be holding a second one on May 10 (see page 123 in the Coming Events).

Research, etc.

To the best of my knowledge little or no long-term research has been done in Larose. The UCPR appears open to the promotion of scientific research in Larose, and it will be interesting to see what direction, if any, this takes in the near future. Stay



OFNC outing 2005, Grant Cemetery in Larose. Photo by C. Hanrahan.

tuned! Breeding birds have been well surveyed over the last five years (2001-2005) as part of the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas project (2001-2005). In 1989 a Forest Bird Monitoring Program (FBMP) site was set up in the forest and monitored variably until recent years. Now, consistent monitoring is being done. As noted above, a vascular plant survey was done during the summer of 2004. Joyce and Allan Reddoch have monitored the status of orchid colonies in Larose for over 20 years, therefore, some interesting and important work has certainly been done. During the fall of 2005, two Carleton University students examined the vulnerability of Larose Forest to continued development pressures, using this forest as an example of how forests throughout Ontario are not adequately protected (Murphy and Sine 2005). There is certainly scope for many and varied projects in Larose and perhaps local universities will become more involved in the future.

Larose Forest BioBlitz

A BioBlitz is a quick inventory or assessment of the variety of flora and fauna found in a defined area over a 24 hour period. The first BioBlitz in the Ottawa area was held in Vincent Massey Park, the Fletcher Wildlife Garden and surrounding areas in 1997 (Vitols and Hamilton 1998).

The Prescott-Russell Stewardship Council is organizing a BioBlitz to be held in Larose Forest this year. Because so little work has been done in Larose, particularly as noted above, on insects, spiders, bryophytes, fungi, etc., this will be a really exciting day of discovery. Details have not been finalized yet, but it will most likely be held in mid-June. We're looking for volunteers with a good knowledge of flora and fauna. Please consider joining in and helping us discover more about this remarkable forest. More information will be posted on the OFNC website, or you can contact me at vanessa@magma.ca for updates.

The Future

Until Larose Forest gains some form of strong protected status through the UCPR Official Plan, it is vulnerable to development pressures. Several times in recent months staff and politicians have called the forest "a jewel." The UCPR website calls the forest "*a unique resource*" and states that it is important to ensure that "*according to its mission, the Larose Forest gains a key place which will permit the promotion of the Larose Forest as being the natural reserve of the region of Prescott and Russell.*" The wording is a bit ambiguous, nevertheless it seems the United Counties recognize the natural heritage value of Larose. However, the new Official Plan, now up for review, needs to state explicitly that the forest will be permanently protected. No ambiguities in wording. Ghislaine Rozon, the driving force behind the move to preserve and protect the forest from day one, has been working on sensible recommendations for the new UCPR Official Plan. Let us hope that the United Counties listen.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to all the people who have worked so hard to protect Larose Forest over the last four years, particularly the appellants in the OMB hearing who endured financial loss for a cause they believed in, and special thanks to Ghislaine Rozon for dedication to the cause and for never saying "I can't."

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Appendix 1. Vascular Plants of Larose Forest- Species of Significance

All species in this table are considered regionally and provincially significant. Regionally significant plants and their definition follow Brunton 1998, and are noted as either Rare or Sparse. Provincial ranking and definition follows the Ontario Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) list.

Regional Status:

Regionally Rare: 5 or fewer contemporary populations (post-1969).

Regionally Sparse: 6-10 contemporary populations (post-1969).

Provincial status:

S1 - Extremely rare in Ontario; usually 5 or fewer occurrences.

S2 - Very rare in Ontario; usually between 6-20 occurrences.

S3 - Rare in Ontario; between 21-100 occurrences.

S3-S4 - Rare to Uncommon in Ontario.

S4 - Uncommon to locally common in Ontario, usually between 101 – 1000 occurrences.

<i>Athyrium thelypteroides</i>	Silvery Spleenwort S4
<i>Dryopteris clintoniana</i>	Clinton's Wood Fern S4
<i>Lycopodiella inundata</i>	Bog Clubmoss Reg. Sparse
<i>Lycopodium obscurum</i>	Ground Pine S4, Reg. Sparse
<i>Lycopodium selago</i>	Fir Clubmoss S3S4, Reg. Sparse
<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	Butternut S4
<i>Rubus setosus</i>	Bristly Blackberry S4?
<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	Highbush Blueberry S4
<i>Carex albicans</i>	Sedge S2
<i>Carex aquatilis</i>	Aquatic Sedge, Reg. Sparse
<i>Carex debilis</i>	Weak Sedge, Reg. Sparse
<i>Carex haydenii</i>	Hayden's Sedge S2, Reg. Rare
<i>Carex lurida</i>	Sallow Sedge, Reg. Sparse
<i>Carex normalis</i>	Spreading Oval Sedge S4
<i>Carex novae-angliae</i>	New England Sedge S3
<i>Carex prasina</i>	Drooping Sedge S4, Reg. Sparse
<i>Carex tuckermanii</i>	Tuckerman's Sedge S4
<i>Carex utriculata</i>	Bottle-shaped Sedge, Reg. Sparse
<i>Cyperus diandrus</i>	Galingale S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Echinochloa microstachya</i>	Small-spiked Barnyard Grass S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Eragrostis frankii</i>	Frank's Love Grass S4, Reg. Sparse
<i>Glyceria melicaria</i>	Long Manna Grass S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Hierochloa odorata</i>	Sweet Grass S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Juncus articulatus</i>	Jointed Rush, Reg. Sparse

Appendix 1. (cont'd)

<i>Leersia virginica</i>	White Grass S4
<i>Panicum boreale</i>	Northern Panic Grass S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Panicum tuckermanii</i>	Tuckerman's Witch Grass S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Aster acuminatus</i>	Whorled Wood Aster S4
<i>Chrysosplenium americanum</i>	Golden Saxifrage S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Desmodium canadense</i>	Showy Tick-trefoil S4
<i>Gentiana andrewsii</i>	Bottle Gentian S4
<i>Gentianopsis crinita</i>	Fringed Gentian S4
<i>Geum laciniatum</i>	Rough Avens S4
<i>Goodyera pubescens</i>	Downy Rattlesnake-plantain, Reg. Rare
<i>Gratiola neglecta</i>	Clammy Hedge-hyssop S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Hieracium scabrum</i>	Rough Hawkweed S4, Reg. Sparse
<i>Hydrocotyle americana</i>	Water Pennywort, Reg. Rare
<i>Hypericum canadense</i>	Canada St. John's-wort S4
<i>Hypericum mutilum</i>	Dwarf St. John's-wort, Reg. Rare
<i>Platanthera grandiflora</i>	Purple-fringed Orchid S1, Reg. Sparse
<i>Polygala sanguinea</i>	Field Milkwort S4, Reg. Sparse
<i>Polygala verticillata</i>	Whorled Milkwort S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Polygonum sagittatum</i>	Arrow-leaved Tear-thumb S4
<i>Rumex triangulivalvis</i>	Willow-leaved Dock S4, Reg. Rare
<i>Scrophularia lanceolata</i>	Figwort S4, Reg. Sparse
<i>Sparganium americanum</i>	American Bur-reed S4?, Reg. Rare
<i>Spiranthes romanzoffiana</i>	Hooded Ladies-tresses, Reg. Sparse
<i>Spirodela polyrhiza</i>	Larger Duckweed, Reg. Sparse
<i>Stellaria longifolia</i>	Long-leaved Stitchwort, Reg. Rare
<i>Utricularia minor</i>	Lesser Bladderwort, Reg. Sparse
<i>Uvularia sessilifolia</i>	Wild-oats S4
<i>Verbena urticifolia</i>	White Vervain, Reg. Sparse

Appendix 2. Birds of Larose Forest- Preliminary List

Breeding evidence is noted with an asterisk (*) alone; species that are thought to nest are followed by an asterisk and a question mark (*?).

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| *Pied-billed Grebe | *Downy Woodpecker |
| *American Bittern | *Hairy Woodpecker |
| *Great Blue Heron | *Northern Flicker |
| *?Green Heron | *Pileated Woodpecker |
| *?Turkey Vulture | American Three-toed Woodpecker |
| *Canada Goose | Black-backed Woodpecker |
| *Wood Duck | *Eastern Wood-Pewee |
| American Wigeon | *Alder Flycatcher |
| American Black Duck | *Least Flycatcher |
| *Mallard | *Eastern Phoebe |
| *Blue-winged Teal | *Great Crested Flycatcher |
| *American Green-winged Teal | *Eastern Kingbird |
| *Hooded Merganser | Northern Shrike |
| Bald Eagle | *Blue-headed Vireo |
| *Sharp-shinned Hawk | *Warbling Vireo |
| *Cooper's Hawk | *Red-eyed Vireo |
| *Northern Goshawk | *Blue Jay |
| *Broad-winged Hawk | *American Crow |
| *Merlin | *Common Raven |
| *Ruffed Grouse | *Tree Swallow |
| Wild Turkey | *Black-capped Chickadee |
| *Virginia Rail | *Red-breasted Nuthatch |
| *Sora | *White-breasted Nuthatch |
| *American Woodcock | *Brown Creeper |
| *Mourning Dove | *House Wren |
| *Black-billed Cuckoo | *Winter Wren |
| *Great Horned Owl | *Golden-crowned Kinglet |
| Northern Hawk Owl | *?Ruby-crowned Kinglet |
| Great Gray Owl | *Eastern Bluebird |
| Long-eared Owl | *Veery |
| Boreal Owl | *Hermit Thrush |
| *Northern Saw-whet Owl | *Wood Thrush |
| *Whip-Poor-Will | *American Robin |
| *Ruby-throated Hummingbird | *Gray Catbird |
| *Belted Kingfisher | *European Starling |
| *?Red-headed Woodpecker | Bohemian Waxwing |
| *Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | *Cedar Waxwing |

Appendix 2. (cont'd)

- *Nashville Warbler
- *Yellow Warbler
- *House Wren
- *Winter Wren
- *Golden-crowned Kinglet
- *?Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- *Eastern Bluebird
- *Veery
- *Hermit Thrush
- *Wood Thrush
- *American Robin
- *Gray Catbird
- *European Starling
- Bohemian Waxwing
- *Cedar Waxwing
- *Nashville Warbler
- *Yellow Warbler
- *Chestnut-sided Warbler
- *Magnolia Warbler
- *Cape May Warbler
- *Black-throated Blue Warbler
- *Yellow-rumped Warbler
- *Black-throated Green Warbler
- *Blackburnian Warbler
- *Pine Warbler
- *Black-and-white Warbler
- *American Redstart *Ovenbird
- *Northern Waterthrush
- *Mourning Warbler
- *Common Yellowthroat
- *Canada Warbler
- *?Scarlet Tanager
- *Eastern Towhee
- American Tree Sparrow
- *Chipping Sparrow
- Fox Sparrow
- *Song Sparrow
- Lincoln's Sparrow
- *Swamp Sparrow
- *White-throated Sparrow
- White-crowned Sparrow
- *Dark-eyed Junco
- *Northern Cardinal
- *Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- *Indigo Bunting
- *Red-winged Blackbird
- *Common Grackle
- *Brown-headed Cowbird
- *Baltimore Oriole
- Pine Grosbeak
- *Purple Finch
- Red Crossbill
- *White-winged Crossbill
- Common Redpoll
- *Pine Siskin
- *American Goldfinch
- *Evening Grosbeak

117 species (20 January 06)

Christine Hanrahan, with thanks to Bob Bracken, Bernie Ladouceur, Chris Lewis, and Ghislaine Rozon.

News from the FWG: Summer through Winter 2005/2006

Christine Hanrahan

The long hot summer progressed into a warm fall with the balmy days lasting into November. This mild weather allowed volunteers to continue working at a variety of outside projects quite late into the season.



New patio. Photo by C. Hanrahan

Backyard Garden News

Changes to the BYG continued apace as visitors familiar with the garden will have noticed. Jay re-laid the patio behind the Interpretive Centre and it is now both level and attractively curved. The brick edging that was mentioned in the last update was placed around more beds making mowing of the grass that much easier. The centre bed has been remade so that it now becomes one with the woodland walk. The

native grass garden is just about complete and in 2006 more of the innovations outlined in the five year plan for the garden will be implemented. All the work is performed by a dedicated band of volunteers under the direction of Jay Ladell. If you would like to join in (and new members are always more than welcome) please contact Jay at jay_ladell@yahoo.com or leave a message at 234-6767.

Events

Under warm, sunny skies on September 24 we took part in AAFC's open house. Although the projected number of visitors didn't materialize, a steady flow of people, ferried around the farm on double-decker buses, visited the garden. A bilingual information sheet, "*Welcome to the Fletcher Wildlife Garden*" was prepared as a handout. Copies are still available at the centre.

Winter is generally a quiet time at FWG but mark your calendars for our two upcoming regular events, International Migratory Bird Day on Saturday May 13, and the Annual Native Plant Sale on Saturday June 3. More information can be found in the "Coming Events" section of this publication, or by checking our website at <http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher>. If you have native plants you would like to donate to the sale please contact Sandy Garland at sgarland@magma.ca. We will also be participating as usual in the Wildlife Awareness Event at Billings Bridge, a part of the Ottawa Wildlife Festival. Visit us there on April 7, 8 and 9, 2006.

The Great Backyard Bird Count will be over by the time you read this report. FWG has participated for some years now and it is always fun to see how many birds we can find during this count. Watch for details in the next update.

Problems

Surprisingly, no fires were found this fall, perhaps a first! This is not to say that we didn't have our share of problems, although I'm happy to say that none were serious. A newly erected boundary sign was removed and slightly damaged in late fall. One of the Old Field birdhouses lost its top (yanked off and discarded nearby), and one of our picnic tables was "borrowed" in January and found at the bottom of the BYG facing the canal. Perhaps the most disheartening problem we encountered was the damage to two White Pines just north of the Ash Woods. Since this happened shortly before Christmas we can only assume they were taken for Christmas trees. One was lopped off near ground level, the other about four feet above the ground. We've watched these trees grow from tiny saplings so it was doubly sad to see this damage. Once again we remind readers that if they see anything suspicious at FWG to please call AAFC Security at 759-1985 and the FWG at 234-6767.

Managing the Garden

Invasive species

The last update contained a great deal about invasive species control (Hanrahan

2005). Late spring and summer are the months for much of this work although buckthorn and Amur Maple removal continued well into the fall. Many thanks to Tony Denton and Colin Freebury for their concerted efforts on this particular task.

Hedgerow

The trail alongside the Hedgerow has become increasingly overgrown in sections as trees and shrubs on both sides meet. Visitors have been breaking off the branches in order to get through. Our choice was to re-route the trail around these obstacles, cut down some of the vegetation, or shorten the trail and allow the rest of it to grow over. We chose the latter. A new directional sign encourages visitors to follow the newly re-routed trail at the appropriate point.



Old Field. Photo by C. Hanrahan

Old Field

As buckthorn and Amur Maples were removed from thickets around this habitat, the density of cover for wildlife was diminished. To remedy this, we have been planting

Why are we doing this?

The objective of the 2nd Annual Photography Contest is to document natural areas and trails in the Ottawa—Gatineau area and to help the Education & Publicity Committee increase its Digital Image Library.



2005 Photo Contest Winner, Birds Theme—Lois Knaggs



Prizes ... There will be a prize for each category as well as for best individual photo.

Judges ... A panel OFNC photographers will judge the entries.

Photos... ownership remains with the photographer. In submitting photos you allow the OFNC use of the images for non-profit purposes.

"Tale of the Trail"

The 2nd Annual Photography Contest



First Annual Photography Contest

Thanks to all the participants of the 2005
OFNC Photography Contest

Over 250 photographs were received

Overall winner—Dave Sangster

Amphibians winner—Ruth Allison

Birds winner—Lois Knaggs

Insects winner—Christine Hanrahan

Mammals winner—Jim Robertson

Scenery winner—Stephen Darbyshire

Vegetation winner—Jim Robertson

Want to ask a
Email to: sde@ofnc.org

See 2005 co
OFNC web sit

Contest runs from
Now to September 30, 2007



The 2007 contest has a NEW THEME "Tale of the Trail"

All you naturalists, hikers, walkers and strollers are invited to take your cameras on outings and create photographic 'tales' of your favourite trails.

Short category—tell a short story about a feature of the trail ... its birds, mammals, flowers, a season, its wetland ... you are the author!

- 15 photos maximum
- Unlimited entries

Long category—tell the whole story about a trail or a detailed story on some facet.

- 100 photos maximum
- One entry per photographer

Submit entries to:

Email: sdeschenes@cyberus.ca or

Regular mail: OFNC (Photo Contest)
Box 35069, Westgate P.O. Ottawa, ON K1Z 1A2

**** See back for more information and rules**

question?
sdeschenes@cyberus.ca



to winning photos at the
<http://www.ofnc.ca>

The Education & Publicity Committee

Contest Rules & Information



Eligible Natural Areas ... Any nature area or trail within 100km of the Peace Tower.

Eligible Participants ... Open to all living, breathing individuals aged 1 to 99 years, except professional photographers. Club membership is not required, so tell your friends!

Rating Criteria ... (and things to include in your submission)

- 1) Proper identification of the trail and the story you are telling—Your title.
- 2) Proper identification of the subjects of your photos—So check your reference books.
- 3) The 'Story Telling' quality of your composition—carefully select and organize your photos. Make sure to indicate the order of the photos.
- 4) The quality of the images—focus, composition, overall visual impact, and so on.

Eligible Formats ... Prints (4x6 min), slides and digital images (over 100K)

Categories

- ... Short (15 photo max) unlimited entries.
- ... Long (100 photo max) 1 entry per person.

a variety of native shrubs to replace the invasives. The fall of 2005 saw this planting continue on the eastern edge of the Old Field. Many thanks to Colin Freebury and Claudia Burns for helping out.

Pond

Over the last few years we've been increasingly concerned with the health of our pond. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are fewer aquatic invertebrates than in previous years and this was borne out by some dip net sampling David Hobden did in 2005 which he compared with results from 2003. We know that we need to conduct systematic monitoring of the pond but haven't quite decided how to proceed. A Carleton University student did some water and benthic organism tests in the pond during the spring and summer of 2005. We don't yet have the results from her work but perhaps future updates will have more news.

In the meantime, we have asked other people for their opinions. Several suggested that the pond needs to be deeper otherwise it is well on its way to becoming a marsh rather than a pond. This can only be done by bringing in heavy equipment for excavation. Others have noted that the pond is fed by nutrient rich water, run-off from the farm fields across the road. Another problem is that the water flows in very close to where it flows out thus there is little circulation. Also a concern are the cattails that have increased and spread substantially over the last three years although they are dying out in some parts of the pond (And we'd like to know why that is too). In late summer and fall Sandy Garland and Diane Lepage spent considerable time removing quantities of the dead cattails. We don't want to remove all of them because they attract nesting Red-winged Blackbirds. Looking back at my notes I see that in 1996 there was no evidence of this species nesting at the FWG. At the same time, cattail growth was limited. As the cattails spread creating good nesting habitat, the blackbirds began nesting with at least eight pairs by 2005. Ideally we'd like to maintain this nesting success while at the same time helping the health of the pond.

Managing the Site

Bill Holland Trail

The trail from just south of the parking lot down to the pond and up the slope on the south side was laid with gravel to help alleviate the muddy, slippery conditions that come with wet weather. We had many positive comments on the improvement and thanks go to all the volunteers who helped with the task, especially Sandy for organizing it all.

Signs

More boundary signs were put up to help demarcate the FWG. Consideration will be given to placing further signs in the spring. Thanks to Charlie Clifford for this work.

We're getting closer to coming up with a new sign to replace the large map sign by the parking lot. Deciding on the design, the material, and the types of information we wanted to display all took time but there is a good chance that by summer 2006 you will see a new and improved sign.



Boundary sign. Photo by C. Hanrahan

Miscellaneous

Two memorial trees, both Sugar Maples, were donated to the FWG and planted by AAFC at the southwest boundary of the garden. In time we hope to create a band of trees and shrubs along this side of the garden to meet up with the thickets on the western edge of the Old Field.

We received two kind donations of books, from Bev Scott (by way of Bev Peterkin) and from Eileen Evans (through her daughter). Some we retained for our library, the rest we listed for sale. Thus far approximately \$200 has been raised for the FWG from this effort.

Jay Ladell, our BYG Manager, very generously replaced all our old light bulbs with energy efficient fluorescent ones at his own expense. Not only is this more environmentally friendly, but they are much brighter than the others. Thanks Jay!

Plants and Animals

Birds

Just as the last Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas volunteer wrap-up was getting underway, a Barred Owl flew past the Interpretive Centre pursued by what seemed like hundreds of crows. It landed first in the ravine and then north of the Ash Woods. This was a new species for the FWG list. A few days later the owl was spotted again in the conifers north of the woods, and again was being mobbed mercilessly by hordes of crows. Another owl, a Great Horned this time, was found on the Christmas Bird Count, but as far as we know hasn't been seen since.

The Red-tailed Hawk, present around the farm since mid-July 2005, continues to be seen regularly as of this writing (early February). A Cooper's Hawk nested in the Arboretum in 2001 and has been consistently seen around the farm and the FWG ever since. This past fall and winter they have been particularly noticeable.

A juvenile Northern Shrike perched near the BYG on October 19 constituted the first Ottawa report for the season. It is not often that we get to hear this species singing or calling but this bird was vocally active for at least 10 minutes. There has been only one more sighting of this species as of early February.

Several Pine Grosbeaks were found feeding on crabapples on December 7. The last time I saw this species at FWG was the winter of 1994. Small flocks of Pine Grosbeaks continue to be seen occasionally in the Arboretum. Also in late January, approximately eight robins were found. A White-throated Sparrow has stuck around the BYG since fall and can be found almost daily feeding with the House Sparrows. A second White-throated Sparrow was present in early January for awhile.

Other Fauna

After an absence of more than a year, it seems that foxes have returned to the farm. The winter of 2004-2005 was characterized by a dearth of fox sightings or signs (scat, tracks), while the den sites were all quiet. In late fall 2005 a couple of reports came in from people who thought they'd seen a fox around the fields but neither report was verifiable. When the first snow came I went down to the pond to look for tracks and found one set of what could only be fox tracks. Cause for hope! I checked the farm fields frequently and found only occasional sets of tracks, but one day in mid-January I finally saw a very healthy looking fox outside one of the traditional den sites! If all goes well we may be lucky enough to see this animal on a more regular basis again. And perhaps our rabbit population will return to some sort of balance!

Volunteer Opportunities

If you would like to help us remove invasive species, plant trees, work in the BYG, or with any number of other activities, please contact the FWG (details at end of

article).

The Friday morning (BYG) and Sunday morning (the rest of the FWG) work crews will begin work in the spring and the Wednesday evening group will be a springtime-only group in 2006.

Acknowledgments:

As always, a big thank you to the many volunteers who make the garden the wonderful place it is.

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FWG Details and Contact Information

The FWG is located off Prince of Wales Drive on the Central Experimental Farm. For more information please visit the website at: <http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher.php>. Brochures about the garden are available from the Centre on Friday mornings from spring through fall, Sunday afternoons in the summer, or during the week June through August when we have a summer employee.

- FWG phone number: 613-234-6767
- David Hobden, Chair, FWG Management Committee: dhobden@magma.ca
- Jay Ladell, BYG Manager: jay_ladell@yahoo.com
- Sandy Garland: website and information about the FWG: sgarland@magma.ca
- Christine Hanrahan: bird and wildlife observations: vanessa@magma.ca

Editor's Note: Amendment to Pelee trip of 2005

It has come to the editor's attention that the wonderful photographs used in article *The OFNCs Pelee trip of 2005* published in Volume 40, Number 1 were taken by Club member Bill Stewart. Therefore the credits and captions should be as follows:

Fox Snake taken at Hillman Marsh. Photo by Bill Stewart.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on Nest (Digiscoped) Rondeau Provincial Park. Photo by Bill Stewart.

Part of OFN group on the Marsh Board Walk, Pelee National Park. Photo by Bill Stewart.

Neotridactylus apicalis (Larger Pygmy Locust/Pygmy Mole-cricket): A New *Orthoptera* Species for the Ottawa District

Eric Snyder

Introduction

From late June until early October of 2005, I observed locusts of the species *Neotridactylus apicalis* in an abandoned sand pit on the campus of Kemptville College, in Kemptville Ontario. I collected three voucher specimens in September, and nature photographer, Bev Wigney, took several photographs. The first specimen was collected on 18 September: an immature locust, approximately 5 mm in length. On 21 September, Bev Wigney photographed an adult, approximately 10 mm in length, which I subsequently collected. Photographs were taken of another immature locust on 24 September. On the same day I collected a very desiccated, dead adult. Photographs can be viewed online at <http://www.pbase.com/crocodile/neotridactylus>. The specimens were deposited in the Canadian National Collection at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Ottawa.

This is the first record of *Neotridactylus apicalis* for the Ottawa District within Ontario. According to Dr. Henri Goulet, entomologist at the Experimental Farm, it is one of only two records from the Ottawa District. The species has also been found by Benoit Ménard and Raymond Hutchinson approximately 75 km to the north-northwest, on the north shore of the Ottawa River at Quyon, Québec.

Habitat at Kemptville College

Vickery and Kevan (1985) write that the species "occurs mainly on damp sand bars or in sandy or silty areas with sparse vegetation near water, including the edges of ditches."¹ This is consistent with the observations made in Kemptville, except perhaps that surface water at the sand pit is for the most part seasonal. However, although surface water is not always present, the water table is relatively close to the

¹ It is thought that *Neotridactylus apicalis* ingests sand particles and digests the microscopic algae on the surface of such particles (Vickery and Kevan 1985).

surface, even during the late summer months. No doubt this is because the sand pit, which is situated within an area predominately of upland forest, borders a large wetland.

The sand pit is undoubtedly of anthropogenic origin, appearing to have been used in the past for small-scale extraction. At present, it is largely dominated by early successional and weedy, non-native vascular plant species.

Locusts were initially observed near the north-facing (southern) edge of the sand pit, which slopes steeply to a low area that often floods in spring and following heavy rains. Vegetation is very sparse to non-existent on this slope. A complete list of vascular plant species found nearby is given in Table 1.

Subsequently, locusts were also observed on a southwest-facing sandy slope towards the northern edge of the sand pit. This slope is also adjacent to a low area that floods in spring. Vegetation on this slope is also very sparse but with a somewhat different species composition (Table 1).

The lowest part of the sand pit supports some common wetland and riparian plants such as *Onoclea sensibilis* (Sensitive fern), *Typha sp.* (Cattail), *Phalaris arundinacea* (Reed canary-grass), *Scirpus cyperinus* (Wool-grass), *Juncus alpinoarticulatus* (Rush), *Salix lucida* (Shining willow) and *Cornus sericea* (= *Cornus stolonifera*) (Red-osier dogwood). However, wetland species do not flourish here. The plants of the genus *Typha*, and most of those belonging to the species *Phalaris arundinacea*, do not develop inflorescences during the growing season.

Identification of Ontario Tridactylidae

Having given the reader an indication of where to look for *Neotridactylus apicalis*, the question to ask would seem to be the following: How does the reader identify the species once it has been found? Species in the family Tridactylidae (*i.e.*, the Pygmy Mole-crickets), in addition to being characteristically small in size, are the only orthopteroid insects represented in the district that have front legs adapted for digging. Thus, if a tiny locust is found here having enlarged, mole-like front legs, the problem is one of identifying the species of tridactylid to which it belongs.

Vickery and Kevan (1985) recorded two Ontario species in the family Tridactylidae: *Neotridactylus apicalis* and *Ellipes minutus* (Minute Pygmy Locust/Pygmy Mole-cricket).² According to Steven Paiero at the University of Guelph, who is currently evaluating the conservation status of Ontario Orthoptera, *Ellipes minutus* probably does not extend as far north as *Neotridactylus apicalis*, but may have been

² Dr. Stephen Marshall and Steven Paiero, are currently studying the possible occurrence of a third species in southwestern Ontario

overlooked if not targeted by collectors. Hence, I will briefly describe the characteristics that can be used to differentiate these two species.

There are four main characteristics to consider: size, colouration and two morphological characteristics. *Neotridactylus apicalis* is the larger of the two species, the adults reaching up to 10 mm in length, which is about twice as long as an adult *Ellipes minutus*. However, an immature *N. apicalis* may be the same size as an adult of *E. minutus*. Therefore, colouration together with size makes for a more definite identification of smaller insects. *Neotridactylus apicalis* is darker overall, having both black and chocolate brown markings on a light brown background. In *Ellipes minutus*, the markings are black, strikingly contrasted with a light, yellow-brown background colour.

The two morphological characteristics are probably the most reliable for identification, but require at least 10x magnification and a basic understanding of orthopteroïd anatomy. *Neotridactylus apicalis* has what is called "a prosternum with a median conical process." The "median conical process" is a cone-shaped projection underneath the head between the two front legs. This "prosternal projection" is lacking in *Ellipes*. In addition, the length of the hind tarsus (the segment immediately beyond the tibia) of *N. apicalis* is greater than or equal to the length of the subapical tibial spurs; but in *E. minutus* the hind tarsus is vestigial, being much shorter than the subapical tibial spurs and barely visible. For an illustration of the parts of the hind leg in question, I refer readers to Dr. Gerald Fauske's 2002 online publication. The chapter called "Anatomy of a Grasshopper" is found at

<http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/instruct/brewer/brewer/dept/hopper/anatomyimg5.htm>.

In tridactylids, there are two short apical spurs, and two much longer subapical spurs, attached to the hind end of the tibia along with the tarsus.

Abundance and Distribution in Ontario

Vickery and Kevan (1985) mapped only four localities for *Neotridactylus apicalis* in Ontario, all in the southwestern part of the province. However, Dr. Stephen Marshall and Steven Paiero have found that the species is not as rare in southern Ontario as previously believed. It is the more common of the Ontario tridactylids; but, it is not often collected and is still not considered very common. The phrase "uncommon, but not rare" might best convey its abundance in the province.

Capinera *et al* (2004) include parts of northwestern Ontario, *e.g.*, the Kenora and Rainy River Districts, within the range of *Neotridactylus apicalis*. The existence of the species in this area seems to have been inferred from a single record in southeast Manitoba, and another in northern Minnesota (*cf.* Vickery and Kevan 1985). No collections have been made from northwestern Ontario. However, it is possible that the species occurs there.

The range map in Capinera *et al* (2004) also indicates that the species does not occur northeast of the line extending between the most eastern point of Georgian Bay and the most eastern point of Lake Ontario. In comparison with the Kemptville College record, Steven Paiero identifies Presqu'île Provincial Park as the next easternmost Ontario locality for the species, and that which is closest to the Ottawa District. Hence, the Kemptville College record represents an approximately 200 km Ontario range extension to the northeast. Together with the Quyon record, it suggests that *Neotridactylus apicalis* may in fact occur throughout eastern Ontario and into western Québec where there are appropriate habitats.

Conclusion

Neotridactylus apicalis is currently given a sub-national rank of "S1?". An "S1" ranking means that there are five or fewer records for the province, but the question mark means that the ranking is uncertain. As indicated above, additional records have been established since 1985, including the two from the Ottawa District.

The species may inhabit other sand pits, dunes and sandy shorelines of streams and rivers in the district. If readers are visiting such habitats, look for tiny dark locusts burrowing in the sand, or leaping up to one and a half meters high and three meters distant. Insects fitting this description may be *Neotridactylus apicalis*.

Acknowledgements

The following people kindly provided information and advice, which contributed to the writing of this article: Stephen Marshall (University of Guelph), Steven Paiero (University of Guelph), Henri Goulet (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), Stephen Darbyshire (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), Paul Catling (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), Mike Oldham (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources) and Bev Wigney.

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Table 1. List of vascular plants found near the sand pit. The dot indicates the presence of the species.

Plant Species	South Edge	North Edge
<i>Equisetum pratense</i> (Meadow Horsetail)	●	●
<i>Equisetum variegatum</i> (Variegated Horsetail)		●
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> (saplings) (Eastern White Cedar)		●
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> (Creeping Bent Grass)	●	●
<i>Danthonia spicata</i> (Poverty Oat Grass)	●	
<i>Bromus inermis</i> (Smooth Brome Grass)	●	●
<i>Digitaria ischaemum</i> (Small crab-grass)		●
<i>Digitaria sanguinalis</i> (Large crab-grass)	●	●
<i>Elymus repens</i> (= <i>Elytrigia repens</i>) (Quack-grass)	●	
<i>Panicum capillare</i> (Common Witch Grass)	●	
<i>Poa compressa</i> (Canada Blue Grass)	●	
<i>Setaria pumila</i> (= <i>Setaria glauca</i>) (Yellow Foxtail)		●
<i>Phleum pratense</i> (Timothy)		●
<i>Sphenopholis intermedia</i> (Slender Wedge Grass)	●	●
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> (saplings) (Balsam Poplar)		●

Plant Species	South Edge	North Edge
<i>Populus tremuloides</i> (saplings) (Trembling Aspen)	•	•
<i>Salix eriocephala</i> (Heart-leaved willow)	•	
<i>Salix cf. humilis</i> (Upland Willow)	•	•
<i>Salix petiolaris</i> (Slender Willow)	•	•
<i>Betula papyrifera</i> (sapling) (Paper Birch)		•
<i>Polygonum persicaria</i> (Lady's-thumb)	•	
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> (Sheep Sorrel)	•	•
<i>Silene vulgaris</i> (Bladder Campion)		•
<i>Trifolium pratense</i> (Red Clover)	•	•
<i>Potentilla canadensis</i> (Common Cinque foil)	•	
<i>Rubus allegheniensis</i> (Blackberry)	•	•
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i> (Common Strawberry)		•
<i>Oxalis stricta</i> (Yellow Wood-sorrel)	•	
<i>Vitis riparia</i> (Wild grape)		•
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i> (Common St. John's-wort)	•	•
<i>Oenothera biennis</i> (Evening-primrose)	•	
<i>Daucus carota</i> (Wild Carrot)		•
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i> (Common Milkweed)	•	•
<i>Echium vulgare</i> (Blue-weed)	•	•
<i>Lycopus uniflorus</i> (Northern Bugleweed)		•
<i>Agalinus tenuifolia</i> (Slender Agalinus or Slender Gerardia)	•	
<i>Verbascum thapsus</i> (Common Mullein)		•
<i>Plantago major</i> (Common Plantain)		•
<i>Lobelia inflata</i> (Indian Tobacco)	•	
<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i> (= <i>Aster novae-angliae</i>) (New England Aster)		•
<i>Chrysanthemum leucanthemum</i> (Ox-eye Daisy)	•	

Plant Species	South Edge	North Edge
<i>Erigeron strigosus</i> (Strigose Fleabane)	•	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Yarrow)	•	
<i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia</i> (Ragweed)	•	•
<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i> (Pearly everlasting)	•	
<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i> (Boneset)	•	•
<i>Hieracium aurantiacum</i> (Orange Hawkweed)	•	•
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i> (Brown-eyed Susan)	•	
<i>Euthamia graminifolia</i> (Grass-leaved Goldenrod)		•
<i>Solidago canadensis</i> (Canada Goldenrod)	•	•
<i>Solidago nemoralis</i> (Gray Goldenrod)	•	•

Falcon Watch 2006

Eve Ticknor

Once again we are getting ready for another season of monitoring our Peregrine Falcon family! Their home is the Crowne Plaza on Lyon Street in Ottawa.

Each year volunteers take turns watching our young falcons as they take their wings, just in case they need a little help. The pay is nonexistent but the benefits far outweigh that little problem.

Our season runs about three weeks during the second half of June. Do you like to meet new people? Learn about falcons? Come and join our crew and help us celebrate our 10th Anniversary!

Contact Eve Ticknor at 737-7551 or 859-9545 or by email at sandbird@magma.ca.

Limerick Forest Old Growth

Stew Hamill

Chair, LFAC Ecology Subcommittee

Limerick Forest is a 5788-hectare county forest in Eastern Ontario. It was managed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) as an agreement forest from its creation in 1940 until 2000. Then, under provincial restructuring, management responsibilities were returned to the owner, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. To assist the county government with its new management duties, a citizens' advisory committee was created under the guidance of the Grenville (County) Land Stewardship Council. The Limerick Forest Advisory Committee (LFAC) now plays the role of coordinator, with a budget from the county. Leeds/Grenville has hired a forest manager and a forest technician to work under the direction of LFAC.

In 2003, the LFAC Ecology Subcommittee initiated a project to identify potential old growth stands in Limerick Forest for designation as protected areas. Over 500 hectares of native forest over the age of 70 years were selected for field check, inventory, and evaluation. These areas include Black Ash (*Fraxinus nigra*) swamp, both upland and lowland Eastern White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), upland Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*), Soft Maple (*Acer rubrum* and/or *Acer saccharinum*) wetland, and both deciduous and mixed upland and lowland forests. Some of these stands are within ANSI (Area of Natural and Scientific Interest) and/or provincially significant wetland boundaries.

Three summers of field work produced documentation on some of the most beautiful, most healthy, and most diverse stands in Limerick Forest. The identified potential old growth blocks are geographically located randomly in forest tracts scattered across the united counties. By chance, most human population centres have at least one in the vicinity. These stands could become centres of biodiversity, of tourism and recreation interest, and of research and education activity throughout the forest. Also by chance, all of the different native forest ecosites are present on the potential old growth list, thus ensuring that naturally-growing examples of all forest types are represented.

Some of the notable species found in this study include:

- several ferns
 - Polypody *Polypodium vulgare*
 - Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum pedatum*
 - Christmas Fern *Polystichum acrostichoides*
 - Leathery Grape Fern *Botrychium multifidum*
- Shining Clubmoss *Lycopodium lucidulum*
- Smaller Purple Fringed Orchis *Habenaria psycodes*
- Turtlehead *Chelone glabra*
- Pileated Woodpecker *Dryocopus pileatus*
- Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus*
- Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
- Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*
- Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*
- Cape May Warbler *Dendroica tigrina*
- Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa*

After an extensive review and discussion process, the recommendation to designate approximately 10% of Limerick Forest as Old Growth was approved in principle in October 2005.

On May 7, 2005, an Ottawa Field-Naturalists Club outing introduced 15 members to Limerick Forest and to an old growth stand near North Augusta. The destination was a conifer stand over 110 years in age, containing White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) and Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), which had been assessed as “quality 1” potential old growth.

Typical old growth forests contain:

- large, old trees
- abundant slow-growing species (such as lichens, mosses, and fungi) which indicate a lack of disturbance
- abundant dead trees, cavity trees, and fallen logs (which are good for woodpeckers, cavity nesters, den users, and salamanders)
- other species of plants and animals which need the above features.

On the field trip we saw all of these features, plus we saw and/or heard:

- Red-shouldered Hawk (on its nest) *Buteo lineatus*
- Pileated Woodpecker *Dryocopus pileatus*
- Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius*
- Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*
- Red-breasted Nuthatch. *Sitta canadensis*

One of the participants found an owl pellet containing a Muskrat (*Ondatra*

zibethicus) skull.

From the old growth stand we travelled to the Limerick Chalet on Limerick Road for lunch, then made the short hike to the boardwalk, where we saw and/or heard:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| • Common Raven | <i>Corvus corax</i> |
| • Black Tern | <i>Chlidonias niger</i> |
| • Pied-billed Grebe | <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i> |
| • Sora | <i>Porzana carolina</i> |
| • Common Moorhen | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> |

The Doug Tarry Bird Study Awards for Young Ornithologists

Long Point Bird Observatory

The Doug Tarry Bird Study Awards offers people aged 13-17 an opportunity to experience "hands-on" training in field ornithology. Participants are taught how to identify, age, and sex birds as well as learning about avian behaviour and population dynamics. Participants will also experience regular field trips, slide shows and some nocturnal field work. The workshop is 10 days long and will be held from Friday 28 July through to Sunday 6 August at the Long Point Bird Observatory.

The Doug Tarry award covers accommodation, meals and travel costs while attending the workshop; however recipients are responsible for getting to and from Long Point.

Interested individuals can obtain application forms from either the website (www.bsc.eoc.org/lpbo/yow.html) or from Stuart MacKenzie at lpbo@esc-eoc.org.

Deadline for applications is 30 April 2006

Waterfall Nature Reserve in Thorne Québec: A potential OFNC study area and excursion site

Ian Huggett

I would like to make available an excursion site with interesting life science features to OFNC members. I would also like to determine if there is any interest from OFNC members in enhancing this future excursion site situated in Thorne Québec. I am currently negotiating the purchase of 98 acres of forested land 20 km north of Shawville in Thorne Centre. The property is a one and a half hour drive from Ottawa.

The purpose is to create a private nature reserve. The woodlot is comprised of semi-mature spruce and Balsam Fir in low lying areas and Sugar Maple in upland sites. There is an old square log barn and log cabin on the property. Almost half the property is wetlands—mostly beaver meadow serviced by a creek and small waterfall. There are numerous wetlands with open water on adjoining lots. There is a heron rookery on another private lot about 2 km away on Marais à Percy-Tubman.

Thorne is the least populated municipality in the Pontiac and thus its landscape remains the most remote. The property was settled by conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War in the 1970s and was later abandoned. The surrounding landscape is characterized by thousands of acres of dense mixed forest and wetlands in hilly terrain with elevations comparable to those in Gatineau Park. However, unlike Gatineau Park the area is devoid of tourists. Two kilometers away is 450 acres of pristine crown land surrounding Nelson Lake which is dominated by magnificent old growth Sugar Maple and Eastern Hemlock. (Unfortunately this land was recently handed over to the municipality to be logged—but for now it remains untouched and contains numerous hiking trails).

To help establish and legitimize this land as a Nature Reserve in an area dominated by logging and hunting, I need to acquire and erect an infrastructure characteristic of a nature reserve or conservation area.

This is where member of the OFNC can contribute. I am looking for the following donated (used) items:

- (1) bird nesting boxes (the more the better)
- (2) picnic tables (preferably four)
- (3) an old farm gate
- (4) cedar posts

Any help securing these items and setting up nesting boxes by May would be much appreciated. I am also organizing some tree planting in a small clearing on the property on Tuesday May 23 (see page 123 in this issue's coming events). I hope that the OFNC can assist in establishing the reserve which I hope will become a regular excursion site for the organization. If you feel you can assist in this important project please contact me at (819) 684-5342 or ecowatch@magma.ca.

Directions to Nature Reserve: Take hwy 148 west out of Aylmer to Shawville. In Shawville, turn north on hwy 303 towards Ladysmith. Five kilometers before reaching Ladysmith turn east (right) at Hodgins on to Thorne Lake Road. Turn left on Mountain Road until you reach waterfall Road on the left. The land is 500 m south of Lac du Gouvernement. UTM /NAD 27 946 635.

Wildlife Festival Presentations

Christine Hanrahan

Wildlife Festival Awards and Feature Presentation:

Come celebrate the winners of the 2006 Awards for Excellence in Environmental Conservation and meet the folk who have made a significant contributions. We are also proud to announce that Becky Mason, daughter of the legendary film-maker and canoeist Bill Mason, will be our featured speaker.

Get to Know Your Watershed:

Join us for an exciting and very topical forum on watershed issues. We are dependent on having a healthy watershed and this forum will help us all learn more about what constitutes a watershed, why are they important, what threats do they face, and how they can be protected. We will examine the issues of water quality, source water protection, wetland habitats, and learn how several local community groups have banded together to protect their local watersheds.

Admission is free and will be at the Canadian Museum of Nature. Both events are sponsored by the Ottawa Wildlife Festival, of which the OFNC is a participant. Full details can be found in the coming events. For more information, please contact Christine Hanrahan at vanessa@magma.ca, or visit the festival website at www.ncrwildlifefestival.org.

Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions & Lectures Committee.

For further information,
call the Club number (722-3050).

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: *Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.*

REGISTERED BUS TRIPS: *Make your reservation for Club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (Payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing. Your cooperation is appreciated by the Committee so that we do not have to wait to the last moment to decide whether a trip should be cancelled due to low registration. In order for the Club to offer a bus trip, we need just over 33 people to register. If fewer than 30 register, we have the option of cancelling the trip or increasing the cost. Such decisions must be done a week in advance so we encourage anyone who is interested in any bus trip to register as early as possible. We also wish to discourage postponing the actual payment of bus fees until the day of the event.*

EVENTS AT THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE: *The Club is grateful to the Museum for their cooperation, and thanks the Museum for the use of these excellent facilities.*

BIRD STATUS LINE: *Phone 860-9000 to learn of recent sightings or birding potential in the Ottawa area. To report recent sightings use the 860-9000 number and stay on the line. This service is run on behalf of the Birds Committee and is available to members and non-members.*

Note: *For all these many years our members have enjoyed free parking at our monthly meetings at the Canadian Museum of Nature. Starting in September 2005, we are asked to pay a flat evening rate of \$5 per car.*

Sunday
2 April
6:30 a.m.
to
6:30 p.m.

SPRING BIRDING AT PRESQU'ILE

Leaders: Tom Hanrahan & David Britton.

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Rd. at Assaly Rd. by Pizza Pizza
The Club's traditional spring outing to Presqu'ile Provincial Park offers an ideal opportunity to study the diverse assortment of water fowl that congregate in the surrounding waters during their northward migration. Transportation will be by a comfortable motor coach equipped with washroom. Bring a lunch. We usually stop for a coffee break going and on the return trip home. Dress appropriately for the weather. The cost is \$28 which will cover entrance fees to Presqu'ile. (PLEASE REGISTER EARLY; see the introduction to Coming Events for information.)

Please remember to set your clocks AHEAD before retiring Saturday as this is daylight savings weekend.

Tuesday
11 April
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
business

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

THELON GAME SANCTUARY: WHERE TIME AND LIGHT STAND STILL

Speaker: Max Finkelstein

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

The Thelon Game Sanctuary is one of the largest, and most remote protected areas in Canada, and the last mainland area of Canada to be explored by Europeans. Here is the land of the Pleistocene, or as close as one can get to it these days anywhere on earth. It is a land barely out of the Ice Age, a land unchanged by our society, where you can travel for weeks and not see another person. Here is Canada's 'Serengeti'—one of the world's largest, least disturbed ecosystems. Here, caribou still migrate vast distances, Grizzly Bears and wolves roam, raptors soar, and Musk Ox graze undisturbed. Yet this had once been a peopled land and their marks bear testimony to the people who had called this land home.

Max hopes to bring a taste of the magic and mystery of the Thelon Game Sanctuary through slides and stories.

7:30 p.m.
Speaker

Wednesday
19 April
6:00 p.m.
to
8:30 p.m.

WILDLIFE FESTIVAL AWARDS AND FEATURE PRESENTATION

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

Come celebrate the winners of the 2006 Awards for Excellence in Environmental Conservation. Meet the folk who have made a significant contribution to the conservation of our natural world. We are also proud to announce that Becky Mason, daughter of the legendary film-maker and canoeist Bill Mason, will be our featured speaker. Becky, an artist and a canoeist in her own right, has canoed some of the most remarkable rivers in Canada and she will give us a stunningly photographed tour fittingly entitled, "*Watershed Moments: Memorable Rivers I've Paddled*". Admission is free. Refreshments will be provided. This event is sponsored by the Ottawa Wildlife Festival, of which the OFNC is a participant. For more information please contact Christine Hanrahan at vanessa@magma.ca, or visit the festival website at www.ncrwildlife festival.org

Thursday
20 April
7:00 a.m.
to
noon

SPRING BIRDING EAST OF OTTAWA ALONG THE FLOODPLAINS OF BEAR BROOK AND THE SOUTH NATION RIVER

Leader: Bruce DiLabio

Meet: Elmvale Acres Shopping Centre, northwest corner of the parking lot at the junction of St. Laurent Boulevard and Smyth Road. Cars may be left at St. Aiden's Church nearby.

This is a midweek trip to view ducks, geese and other water birds. We will also be looking for spring migrants and migrating hawks. Remember to bring a snack and dress for the weather. Please register at the Club number (722-3050) so that participants may be informed if alternate arrangements have to be made.

Sunday
23 April
9:00 a.m.
to
noon.

SPRING NATURE WALK

Leader: Dave Moore

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road by Pizza Pizza.

Join Dave on an easy beginners nature walk on NCC pathways behind the Nortel Building on Carling Avenue. We shall look for signs of spring such as returning birds and early spring flowers. Waterproof boots may be required in some areas.

Saturday
29 April
7:30 p.m.

OFNC SOIRÉE

Meet: St. Basil's Church, off Maitland, just north of the Queensway.

Come for an evening of fun and celebration at our annual Club event. Tickets may be reserved in advanced by calling the Club number or may be purchased at the door on the night of the soirée. See insert in previous issue for details.

For more information call Marilyn Ward at our Club number 722-3050, or for information regarding displays please call Phil Jeffreys at 721-0139.

May
to
September

FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Location: The FWG Interpretive Centre is on the east side of Prince of Wales Drive, south of the traffic circle.

The interpretive centre will be open on Friday mornings from spring through fall, Sunday afternoons in the summer, or during the week June through August when we have a summer employee. Brochures about the garden are available from the Centre

Tuesday
2 May
6:00 p.m.
to
9:30 p.m.

GET TO KNOW YOUR WATERSHED

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature,
Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

Join us for an exciting and very topical forum on watershed issues. We are all dependent on having a healthy watershed and this forum will help us all learn more about what exactly constitutes a watershed, why are they important, what threats do they face, and how they can be protected. We will examine the issues of water quality, source water protection, wetland habitats, and learn how several local community groups have banded together to protect their local watersheds. There will be an information table, many displays, handouts, and free refreshments. Admission is free. This event is sponsored by the Ottawa Wildlife Festival, of which the OFNC is a participant. For more information please contact Christine Hanrahan at vanessa@magma.ca, or visit the festival website at www.ncrwildlife festival.org.

Thursday
4 May
6:30 p.m.

BRITANNIA WOODS CONSERVATION AREA

Leader: Dave Moore

Meet: Entrance gate to the Britannia Filtration Plant on
Cassels Rd.

This informal walk is offered to expand members' general knowledge of local natural history. Children are most welcome. Bring waterproof footwear and insect repellent.

Sunday
7 May
8:30 a.m.
to
12:30 p.m.

SPRING RAMBLE AT THE MILL OF KINTAIL

Leader: Connie Clark

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner
of the parking lot, Richmond Rd. at Assaly Rd. by Pizza
Pizza

In the spring, the ephemeral flowers burst forth quickly and soon disappear. Come and catch the fleeting gala of spring wildflowers. Last year, the trails at the Mill of Kintail offered up quite a wonderful display. This site is lovely at any time of the year. Some of the paths may be muddy so wear water proof shoes. A hat and insect repellent are recommended. Bring binoculars and a magnifying glass, if you have them, and bring a snack.

Tuesday
9 May
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
business

7:30 p.m.
Speaker

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
CRYPTIC BIODIVERSITY UNDERGROUND, UP
TREES AND DOWN EVERY CRACK: MITES
'DOWN UNDER'

Speaker: Fred Beaulieu

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

Mites (Acari) are arguably the most understudied group of arthropods, though they might be as diverse as beetles. Most species have no names, even in Canada, and their ecology remain largely unknown. Free-living mites can be found in about any habitat—soil and litter, rotting wood, fungi, forest canopies, freshwater and sea abysses. Parasitic mites, analogously, occur in almost every mammal, bird, reptile, or invertebrate. This talk will briefly review the diversity of mite behaviours, and then some aspects of my recent research on soil-dwelling predatory mites will be presented.

Wednesday
10 May
10:00 a.m.

HISTORICAL WALK AND TALK IN LAROSE
FOREST

Leaders: Alexandra De Quimper and Christine Hanrahan

Meet: The Fletcher Wildlife Garden **OR** at 11:00 a.m. at the Grant Cemetery in the Larose Forest on Grant Road.

Alexandra is a local historian with a special interest in Larose Forest. She has done extensive exploration of the old Grant Settlement that once existed in what is now Larose Forest. She will take us on a "Walk and Talk" pointing out where various buildings used to stand. History will come alive as we learn in vivid detail what life was like at the turn of the 20th Century. After a tour around the cemetery, where the remains of the old church stand, we will have lunch. Afterwards, we will walk along a forest road to the site of the old schoolhouse. Along the way we will look and listen for the sights and sounds of Larose Forest. The round trip will be 4 km. This is a repeat of the popular 2005 excursion, but at a different time of year. Alexandra promises some exciting new discoveries to share with us! We will go rain or shine, so dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes. The walk is limited to 10 participants.

Please register with Christine at 613-728-6953.

Saturday
13 May
7:30
to
10:30 a.m.

RETURNING MIGRANTS

Leader: Ken Allison

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road, by Pizza Pizza.

On this morning bird outing we shall be looking for returning warblers and spring migrants in the west end of Ottawa and Mud Lake, Britannia. Dress for the weather and bring mosquito repellent.

Saturday
13 May
10:00 a.m.
to
12 noon

International Migratory Bird Day

Location: Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

The FWG is the perfect setting to celebrate the return of migratory birds to our region. Join us for a free guided birding tour of the garden and get a close-up look at some of these neo-tropical migrants just back from their Latin American wintering grounds. There will be free handouts, displays and refreshments. No registration necessary. Contact Christine Hanrahan at vanessa@gamma.ca for more information.

Tuesday
16 May
6:30 p.m.

MONAGHAN FOREST

Leader: Connie Clark

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road, near Pizza Pizza **OR** at about 6:45 p.m. at the Monaghan Forest parking lot off Fallowfield Rd. between Moodie Drive and Richmond Rd.

This is normally, a real hot spot for wildflowers, insects and birds. Paths can be muddy in spring. Be prepared with waterproof foot wear, binoculars, insect repellent and a hat. See the recent article on Monaghan Forest in *T&L* 39(4):174-177 (Oct-Dec. 2005) for more information.

Tuesday
23 May
1:00 p.m.

**WATERFALL NATURE RESERVE THORNE
QUEBEC**

Leader: Ian Huggett and Fenja Brodo

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road., near Pizza Pizza **OR** at the nature reserve at 2:30 p.m. (see page 116 for directions).

The purpose of this trip is to help plant tree seedlings as well as investigate an interesting piece of property that may have potential for future field trips. Please bring insect repellent, gloves and a trowel. Donations of bird boxes would also be welcome.

Sunday
28 May
9:00 a.m.
to
about noon

**SPRING DRAGONFLIES & BUTTERFLIES OF
THE WEST END**

Leaders: Bob Bracken & Chris Lewis

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road, near Pizza Pizza.

During this half-day trip we will visit two unique habitats, searching for spring butterfly specialties such as all four species of Duskywings, the Olympia, Elphins, and the Chryxus Arctic Butterfly. We will also be capturing and talking about our early-season damselflies and dragonflies. Comfortable footwear is necessary, a snack and drink are optional but recommended, and the more insect nets and viewing jars you can bring, the more fun we'll have! . . . and kids, **BRING YOUR PARENTS!**

Tuesday
30 May
7:30 a.m.
to
9:30 a.m.

EARLY MORNING BIRD WALK FOR BEGINNERS

Leader: Jeff Skevington

Meet: at the entrance gate to the Britannia Filtration Plant on Cassels Rd.

If you are interested in learning about warblers, Britannia is a good spot to start. Also you would probably be able to see waterfowl along the Ottawa River as well as anything else that comes your way.

Saturday

3 June

9:30 a.m.

to

12:30 p.m.

FWG NATIVE PLANT SALE

Location: Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

This annual fund-raiser for the FWG is also a great opportunity for you to purchase good quality native plants, ask questions, get advice, and learn a lot more about native plant gardening. Donations of native plants are more than welcome (species native to eastern Ontario only). You may bring them to the FWG any Friday morning before the sale, or call the garden at 234-6767; we'll be happy to pick them up from you. Mark your calendars now!

Wednesday

7 June

7:00 p.m.

to

9:00 p.m.

EARLY EVENING WALK AT THE FLETCHER

Leader: Sandra Garland

Meet: Fletcher Wildlife Garden Parking lot, east side of Prince of Wales Drive, south of the traffic circle. A map of the garden can be found at

<http://home.achilles.net/ofnc/fletcher/location.php3>

This is a lovely time of day to spot interesting wildlife.

This walk will feature the pond and the bird, amphibian and insect activity associated with it.

Sunday

11 June

8:00 a.m.

to

12:00

noon

GENERAL WILDLIFE WALK

Leader: Roy John

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road, near Pizza Pizza

We shall go to Britannia and proceed to various points of interest to the west along the Ottawa River. This area is great for finding many things.

Tuesday
13 June
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
business

7:30 p.m.
Speaker

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
CONSERVATION SCIENCE OF WOLVES IN THE
ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

Speaker: Carolyn Callaghan

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

Dr. Carolyn Callaghan will give a talk on the scientific research she conducted on wolves for 10 years in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta and British Columbia. Dr. Callaghan will discuss the natural history of wolves, as well as habitat use, survival and persistence of one of the world's lowest densities of wolves. The talk will also focus on the challenges to conserve wolves in the Rocky Mountains.

Wednesday
28 June
7:00 p.m.
to
9:00 p.m.

EARLY EVENING WALK AT THE FLETCHER

Leader: Sandra Garland

Meet: Fletcher Wildlife Garden Parking lot, east side of Prince of Wales Drive, south of the traffic circle. A map can be found at

<http://home.achilles.net/ofnc/fletcher/location.php3>

This will be an easy walk around the garden. At this time there should be lots in bloom, birds nesting, and fireflies may be seen flitting around at dusk.

Sunday
9 July
8:00 a.m.
to
mid afternoon

RAIL LINE WETLANDS

Leader: Stew Hamill

Meet: Lineoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road, near Pizza Pizza, **OR** at 9:30 a.m. at Speneerville (see below).

The abandoned Kemptville-Preccott CP rail line gives access to a number of natural habitats. Several of these areas would be difficult to approach without the availability of such a well-constructed roadbed. Walking or driving portions of the line can provide a number of wildlife sightings. Two large marshes may be accessed by the rail line: the Groveton Bog, a provincially-significant wetland and area of natural and scientific interest, and the headwaters of the South Branch South Nation River. We will visit one of these, depending on conditions in July. Waterbirds and their young should be more visible at this time of the summer. Wear hiking gear, and bring a lunch, water, field guides, and binoculars. Call or email trip leader Stew Hamill (269-3415, or shamill@ca.inter.net) if you wish to meet the group near or at the rail line (Speneerville area).

DEADLINE: *Material intended for the July - September issue must be in the editor's hands by May 1, 2006. Mail your manuscripts to:*

Karen McLaehlan Hamilton
2980 Moodie Drive, Nepean, ON, K2J 4S7
H: (613) 838-4943
email: hamilton@storm.ca.

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